ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Indicate whether the issue listed below is a concern for the proposed action or alternative. If the issue is a concern, explain how it is to be addressed or where it is addressed in this environmental document.

1) Stimulation of secondary environmental effects.

☒ **No - Substantial secondary environmental effects will not be stimulated.**

☐ **Yes - Stimulation of substantial secondary environmental effects will occur. Explain or indicate where addressed.**

2) Creation of a new environmental effect.

☐ **No - A new environmental effect will not be created.**

☒ **Yes - The project will create a new environmental effect. Explain or indicate where addressed.**

All of the build alternatives would require the installation of piers in the Fox River. The piers may cause scouring of the substrate due to altered flow in the river. In a June 9, 2000 letter, the WDNR required that a scour modeling study be conducted because PCBs are known to be present in this area of the river. While scour remains a concern, the configuration of the lock and dam may minimize the impact of the bridge on sediment scour. A copy of the WDNR letter is included (Exhibit 25). WisDOT will conduct the scour modeling study for the project after the preferred alternative has been selected.

From an aesthetic and visual viewpoint, the project will create a new environmental effect. The local government, prior to construction, will be consulted with and have input on the proposed design for the new bridge including railings, street lighting, concrete veneer, etc. The plan is to design an aesthetically pleasing bridge, so that it fits in well with the local surroundings. Refer to the Aesthetics Factor Sheet for additional information regarding the aesthetics issue.

3) Impacts on geographically scarce resources.

☒ **No - Geographically scarce resources will not be impacted.**

All of the build alternatives will require the installation of piers in the Fox River. Based on the June 9, 2000 letter from the WDNR, Lake Sturgeon spawn in an area downstream of the dam between April 7 and June 16. The WDNR will not allow bridge construction activities that could impact the spawning activity during that time period. The WDNR would prefer that a new bridge not be constructed between the existing bridge and the dam, since most of the sturgeon spawning currently occurs between the existing bridge and the dam (Exhibit 25). A new bridge south of the dam would avoid the sturgeon spawning areas. Depending on final alternative selected, construction of a new bridge north of the dam or demolition and removal of the existing bridge will not take place between the April 7 and June 16 timeframe, so as to prevent any disturbance during the sturgeon-spawning period.

☐ **Yes - Impacts on geographically scarce resources will occur. Explain or indicate where addressed.**

4) Precedent-setting nature of the proposed action.

☒ **No - The proposed project does not have a precedent-setting nature.**

☐ **Yes - The proposed project has a precedent-setting nature. Explain or indicate where addressed.**

5) The degree of controversy associated with the proposed action.

☐ **No - The proposed action is not controversial or the level of controversy is low.**

☒ **Yes - The project has a high degree of controversy. Explain or indicate where addressed.**

In general there is a significant degree of controversy associated with the project. Information provided at the public informational meetings have brought several issues to the forefront.

There are some controversial issues associated with the replacement of the Claude Allouez Bridge including the feeling that the rerouting of traffic will increase traffic volume in the downtown area. The project design calls for an increase in the amount of lanes on the bridge and the approach roadways. The intent of the design is not to increase traffic, but to relieve the existing congestion caused by fewer lanes on the bridge and at the approach roadways and intersections. Construction of the bridge may result in a slight increase in traffic in the downtown area, but projections do not show that the traffic will increase significantly as a result of the project.

The 1996 Brown County Transportation Plan ***(Land Use and Transportation Plan*** (Appendix E)***)*** calls for the construction of a bridge over the Fox River south of De Pere by 2020. The purpose of this bridge is to alleviate the increased traffic from development south of De Pere. Many people feel the timeframe for this bridge should be moved up. The feeling is that a bridge proposed several miles south of the Claude Allouez Bridge would significantly reduce traffic, especially truck traffic, on the Claude Allouez Bridge. It is felt that this reduction would then justify a bridge with only two lanes on the existing location. The two-lane bridge proponents feel that a four-lane bridge is not needed and would increase traffic and only exacerbate the traffic congestion through the City of De Pere. The city electorate has forced a binding referendum on this issue ***(Public Input)*** (Appendix U)***)***. The controversy around this project has divided the community, caused the preliminary design and environmental document phase to be extended from the original 19 months to an estimated 48 months, increased expenditures for the community to hold a binding referendum, and has taken a great deal of energy from many stakeholders.

Associated with the construction of any bridge build alternative is the improvement of approach roadways on the east and west sides of the bridge. Improvement of roadways will include maintaining two unimpeded thru lanes (north & south) on Broadway (STH 57) between Cass Street and Lewis Street. Additional lane numbers and lane width will have an impact on the on street parking in this area of the downtown. The loss of this parking has been controversial. While a recent study by a consultant working for the City has indicated adequate parking in this area of the downtown, the businesses feel the quality of parking is of greater economic value on the street than in an area parking lot. Parking spaces on Broadway may be lost but they will be replaced by additional parking. It is estimated that possibly 40 parking spaces may be lost on Broadway, but they could be replaced by an estimated 55 new parking spaces on George Street between Wisconsin Street and Front Street, if the community favors the parking.

Representatives of St. Norbert's College would rather have a replacement for the new bridge constructed in place of the existing one. They believe that if the bridge is constructed closer to the college that it will have a negative effect on the college due to noise and the loss of valuable river vista. The final design of the proposed bridge is not completed as yet but efforts are being made to ensure that the bridge will be aesthetically pleasing to the eye, so that it blends in with the surrounding area. If a replacement bridge were constructed in the same location as the existing bridge, the crossing of the river would be closed in the area for an extended period. Also the alternative of building a bridge in the location of the old one (Alternative 6) would have a great impact on the eastern downtown area due to the widening of the intersection at George Street and Broadway. Additional businesses would have to be relocated due to the expansion of the intersection.

6) Conflicts with official agency plans or local, state, or national policies, including conflicts resulting from potential effects of transportation on land use and land use on transportation demand.

☒ **No - No conflicts with any plans, policies, or land uses will result.**
☐ **Yes - Conflicts with plans, policies or land uses will result. Explain or indicate where addressed.**

7) Cumulative environmental impacts of repeated actions of the type proposed.

☒ **No - The proposed action will not contribute to cumulative environmental impacts of repeated actions.**

☐ **Yes - Cumulative environmental impacts will result from repeated actions of the type proposed. Explain or indicate where addressed.**

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